1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932
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have been the original inhabitants of these parts for a much longer period than can be claimed for their aristocracy.

The chief Talense 'towns', in the sense with which we are now familiar, are as follows: Tongo, Bade, Gorogo, Si, Winduri, Ten'zugu, Tilega, Yamdiga, Biun, Siega, Duse, Datoko, Gbee, Kpantia, Kpale, Wakyiga, Gbeogo, Zandoya, and Gbea. These settlements, including the subjects of the Chief of Kurugu, now constitute the Talense tribe.

History of Tongo (as told me by the present Chief, Kpama): 'We (i.e. his ancestors) came from Mampurugu, which we left owing to a quarrel between *Misore* and his younger brother—whose name we do not know—about the Chieftainship. *Misore* left Mampurugu in consequence and came first to Bogo, thence to Saamere; from there he passed through a dense bush and came to the hills. (The Tong hills.) At the foot of these hills we found a people whom our ancestors called Gundugo or Talense. We intermarried with these people and have all become Talense. *Misore* died here; his grave is marked by a big baobab tree. He was succeeded by his son, *Seyene*, who, now that his father was dead, returned to Mampurugu[1] and received from the Chief the Chieftainship of Tongo. *Seyene* died, and was succeeded by his brother, *Nambogeda*, who also returned to Mampurugu to ask for the Chieftainship. He died, and was succeeded by his younger brother, *Bayayeret*, a son of *Seyene*. About this time, the Chief of Mampurugu made one of his son's Chief of Kurugu, and placed Tongo under Kurugu. *Bayayeret* was succeeded by his "brother" *Sayepele*, a son of *Seyene*, who reported to Kurugu and held his Chieftainship from that ruler. *Sayepele* was succeeded by his brother *Nodeyene* (lit. Short-fowl). *Nodeyene* was succeeded by his younger brother, *Lebsekora* (Old-things-change). He, in turn, was succeeded by *Kusii* (Worn-out-hoe), a son of *Bayayaret*. He was succeeded by *Bileu*, who was succeeded by *Lobsaab* (Throw-away-food), his brother, who, in turn, was succeeded by *Belemsale*, his half-brother, who was succeeded by *Belemboo*, a son of *Kusii*. In his time a great famine came, and many people were sold (to the Dagomba). He was succeeded by *Kabu*, a son of *Lobsaab*. *Lobsaab* was succeeded by *Sapelega* (White-clouds), a half-brother of *Kabu*. *Sapelega* was succeeded by *Kakora*, a son of *Bileu*. He was followed by *Nekay*, a son of *Kusii*; followed by *Paheban*, son of *Belemsale*; *Sagbon* (Dark-cloud), *Lebenwana*, *Bupaa*, son of *Kusii*;

[1] Mampurugu, as we shall see later, was the seat of the Head of the foreign element, who, coming somewhere from the eastward, had founded the empires of Mampruse, Moshi, and Dagomba.

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NAMNAM

XXXVIII

THE NAMNAM

History, Tribal and Clan Organization

101 THE Namnam (*Anglice* Nabdams) are a tribe numbering 8,063.
161 They inhabit the triangular strip of country bounded on the east
131 by the Red Volta; the Talense lie to the south, the Nankanse on the west. They are among the smallest of the Northern Territory tribes. The people call themselves Namnam (sing. Nabt), the language Nabte, and their country Nabrug. The Namnam call the Kasena, Yuls, and the Nankanse, Gurse; the Kanjagas, Bulse, and the Mampruse and Dagomba, Dagbwan. Specimens of the Nabte language have been given in Chapter III.

●103 The capital town (*teya*) of the head Chief is Nangoot (*Anglice*
173 Nangode). The following history was given me by the head Chief:
167 'Our first ancestors were called *Loro* and *Zan*. *Zan* is the name of a
563 tree which was this ancestor's *segere*. There was a quarrel about the
622 Chieftainship at Naleruk (Naleregu, near Gambaga) and these
793 ancestors of ours, who were full brothers, left Gambaga and first settled near a place called Gos, in the Kusase country. There was nothing but thorn scrub there, so the place was named Namgoel, "the Chieftainship of thorns". We quarrelled with the Kusase and came here and gave the place its name. When we came here, we found a people who had not any Chiefs, only *Ten'danam* (*Ten'dama*). They spoke the language now called Nabte. Our people followed *Loro*, and *Zan* became the first Chief. He died and is buried here. The people whom we overtook here, we called Namnam. We became their Chiefs.
[421] We own the people, the *Ten'danam* own the land. The present *Ten'dan'* is called Biriwanab, his grove (*tengwan*) is known as Dakyirig. The *Ten'dan'* makes sacrifices to the land. *Ten'danam* are like your European doctors. *Zan* was succeeded by *Dyeten*. I think he was *Zan's* son, but it is a long time ago. Each Chief when he dies has a stone which is
[778] bathed, rubbed over with shea butter, and kept in the compound of the new Chief in a room. These stones are called *kpwim kuga* (spirit-stones). A sacrifice is made once a year to them. *Dyeten* was succeeded by *Pubuge*. During his time, we heard that the black gun-men (Ashanti?) came with war and reached Akorog (lit. the River). We met them with arrows and had many men taken captive.

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NAMNAM

'Any one who fights with guns we call *Kambonse*. *Pubuge* was succeeded by *Isaka*—we Dagomba were accustomed to give such Mohammedan names to our children. No European had as yet come to our country. We kept in touch with Naleregu, and our Chiefs receive the red fez from Naleregu to this day. *Isaka* was succeeded by *Konteem* (Fail-to-think). He was succeeded by *Bazirene* (They-do-not know that). He was succeeded by *Lamsin*, *Dayi*, *Kapeon*, *Too*, *Yelazoo* (Palavers-in-plenty), *Zure*, and *Nwena*. In his (*Nwena's*) time, the white man came; we fired at them with arrows as they passed. *Nwena* was succeeded by *Yi* (Tree); a tree was his *segere*. During his time, the Europeans asked him to make a road between Navaro and Bawku, but he refused. *Yi* was killed by his own people, because they thought he was conspiring with the Europeans. I myself, *Zuru II*, ran to Bawku and thence to Gambaga and came with Captain Welim (Wheeler?) and we fought and many people were killed; after which peace came.

'Our ancestors were Dagomba,[1] now we are all Namnam. We marry with Kusase, Gruse, Talense. We formerly circumcised.[2] Our ancestors had no marks, but now we tattoo like the Nankanse. I was cut at Do, near Bono. Namnam women have a special marking called *ta velim* (lit. fine marks), running from the nose across the cheeks and round the neck ending on the shoulders.'

Clans: 'The clan (*bura*) of Chiefs is the big-snake clan, *Wa'tetaam* (python). All the fifteen Chiefs who preceded me were of this clan. A python once showed an ancestor where to get water. The people have their own clans.'[3]

Namnam Towns under Nangode: Nangoot (where the head Chief lives), Peluno, Damologo, Tendono, Logode, Dagelega, Zanleregu, Son, Dakyigu, Mosi, Kono, Dobila, Sapare, Dasablego, Gono, Zoga, Yokote, Nyoboka.[4] Each of these towns is known as a *teya*.

Constitution of Namnam Teya: Each *teya* is divided into a number of *yi zut* (sing. *yi zugo*) sections; each section is under a *yi-zu-kpwema* (Elder of a section); all the sections are under one *Kambon-nab* appointed by the head Chief. The head Chief, an exceptionally fine

[1] He does not make any distinction between Mampruse and Dagomba.

[2] The Namnam women have the clitoris removed at the age of puberty.

[3] I, unfortunately, went down with fever and had to cut short my stay with the Namnam before I had made a record of these.

[4] Dateko, Namoo, Sakote, and Dusi are Namnam settlements, but not under the Chief of Nangode.

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Kusase

XXXIX

THE KUSASE

Tribal and Clan Organization. The Tenedan'

101 131 161 THE Kusase are a large tribe, numbering over 40,000, which inhabits the extreme north-eastern corner of the Northern Territories. They also extend across the border into the mandated territory of Togoland. The people call themselves *Kusase*, singular *Kusa*, and their language *Kusal*.[1] Specimens of this dialect have been given in previous chapters. They do not apply the name Gurense to themselves as do the Nankanse.

614 171 *Clans*: The word used in the vernacular is *budi*. A son acquires the clan of his father. Here, for the first time, we encounter a departure from the more common practice of using the totem name to designate the clan. A Kusa, if asked his clan, will give the name, not of its totem, but of the male ancestor from whom all his fellow-clansmen trace descent. On inquiring further, he will then state what is his clan taboo. This departure from the usual practice will also be noted later on among the Lobi. Here again, we find particular clans grouped in certain towns, town again having the meaning of 'area' or 'settlement' rather than township in the commonly accepted sense. The following table illustrates the above.

632

103 614 *Town.*	*Clan.*	*Clan Taboo.*
Gagbir.[2]	Zuos.	*Waf tetar* (lit. big snake i.e. python).
Garu.	Nabt.	*Sur.* (The heart of any animal).
Kugri.	Nabt.	*Sur.* (The heart of any animal).
Timpale.	Nabt.	*Tunig* (a kind of fish with sharp teeth).
Pusig.	Zuos.	Python.

The towns of Bindur, Bugur, Zabuk, Timpan, Bawk' also contain a number of Zuos clansmen. Bawk (Bawku)[3] are really Mampruse, not

197 [1] Kusal is so mu[illegible]te Mole that an officer learned the former language by mistake for the latter and was duly examined by a language board and passed, much to the amusement of critics of the said board. They had, however, every excuse for doing so, the laugh really being against those who, because these languages had different names, thought they were not related. Curiously enough, however, Kusase and Moshi do not intermarry (see p. 390).

[2] *Anglice* Kagbiri.

[3] The *Tenedan'* is, however, a Zuos.

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Kusase

Kusase, being founded by the ruling class. Timoni, another settlement, now included among and talking Kusal, are really Buls' (Builsa).

My informants stated that the Nabt of Kugri, who taboo the heart of an animal, and the Nabt of Timpale, who taboo a fish, formerly did not intermarry but now do so. I was also informed that at Pusig' there is a clan (?) called Narem whose totem is *naf zur* (a cow tail), but that these people, though now talking Kusal, were formerly Bimoba.

From the above it would appear that we had here among the Kusase, two endogamous clans, Zuos and Nabt, a third having been lately added by the breaking away of a branch of the former which had acquired a sub-totem, i.e. the fish, while other clans which may be found in this area are those introduced by the influx of other tribes, Bimoba, Builsa, and Mampruse. In other words, there are signs of the dual organization having existed there. Proof of this supposition must, however, await a fuller and more minute investigation. A parallel to this will, as we shall see later, be found among a neighbouring tribe, the Tampolense (see Chapter LVI).

The blood-related kindred-groups found among the Nankanse, &c., also exist here, being known as *sog*. Again we find the taint of witchcraft transmitted only down this line. 'If your mother "cannot see", if your mother is "blind", all her descendants through the female line are also blind. This relationship is called *sog*. *Soe* is a witch. To "see" is a bad thing. In old days if we found a witch we wanted to tie him up and beat him until he died. You cannot leave a person who is eating people; he will spoil the world. As the Elders sit and converse at night, they will see a fire flickering *ta ta ta* at some compound, and when some one dies, the *baa* (soothsayer) will find out that there is a witch in that compound. Many people can "see" but do not eat people. The children of witches are the beautiful women whom men love the most. In olden times when a witch killed your child or "brother" you would want to kill him, but others would beg you to forgive him.'

Traditions of the Kusase: 'When the Mampruse came from Gambaga, they found us here. In old days we only knew *Tenedan'* and had no *Na* (Territorial Ruler). We have always been here. Even when we move about in the locality and overtake some other people, we sacrifice to the land. *Tenedan' da moro ti* (the *Tenedan'* had us), we did not know what is now called *Nam* (Chieftainship). When anything happened, we all met and gave him (the *Tenedan'*) things to sacrifice and thus gained life and grain. The *Tenedan'* had power; when any one refused to obey him he would strike the land (*nwe tey*) and that person would

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in the culture of this area. A member of one social group identifies another social group or individual by comparison or contrast with his own social identity, and in terms of the most inclusive grouping which suffices to identify the latter unambiguously. The exact identification is relative to the frame of reference common to both parties.

Wherever he may come from in Taleland, a man calls himself a Talǝŋ in contrast to non-Tallensi, citing differences of speech and custom. Thus, female circumcision is practised over a large part of the Northern Territories. All the Tallensi think it a repugnant custom, and say: 'We Talis don't do that—it is a custom (lit. work) of the Gǝris (*Tam Talis pu ct lan—Gǝris tuomǝr nla*).' But Tallensi from different parts of Taleland draw almost equally sharp distinctions amongst themselves, using the same technique of contraposition.

To understand this we must consider the spatial distribution of Tale settlements. For Tale social structure is inseparable from the spatial relations of social units. We shall start from Tongo (Talni, *Tɔŋ*), about a mile from the foot of the hills (see sketch-map, p. 15), one of the most thickly populated settlements in the country and regarded by the Administration as the capital of Taleland. Typically of this part of the country, Tongo and the settlements adjacent to it on all sides—Ba'ari, Zubiuŋ, Zoo, Soog, Wakii, and Gbeog—form a continuous area of habitation thickly studded with homesteads. Beyond this aggregate stretches another ring of settlements indistinguishably continuous with it at many points. On one side of Ba'ari live its Gore neighbours, on the other is Yayazuor, which is separated only by small hillocks and a block of bush-farms from Kpatia, Kpal, and Gbee. The farthest homesteads of Zubiuŋ lie against a low bulge in the plain from the bouldery tip of which one looks down on Sok and Yamǝlǝg, a mile or two away. Zoo and Gbambee merge into one another and overlook Woo. Soog, Wakii, and Gbeog encircle the slopes of the Tong Hills and are separated from Tenzugu, the settlement in the fertile hollow embracing almost the entire summit, only by the ridge of enormous boulders which forms the crown. Gbeog overlaps Ka'ar, which is continuous with Gorogo, Sipaat, and Sii. These settlements climb right up into the gullies and amongst the boulders of the slope of the Hills and straggle out across the broad plain to blend with Dkoog. The homesteads of Sii curl round the nose of the Hills to mingle with those on the outskirts of Yinduur and Zandoya, on the other side below the rim of the Hills. A mile farther along, at the foot of the Hills on their eastern side, are the more scattered homesteads of Santeŋ, Teelǝg, Syek, and Wɔyar, separated from Tenzugu only by the brow of the Hills.

This compact block of settlements is barely separated from a similar block five or six miles north-east of the Hills which begins at Sawalǝg. Between Zoo and Yamǝlǝg lies a mile or so of stony hummocks, covered in parts with the low scrub which shows that it had been cultivated and then abandoned. This is where many people from Tongo and Zoo have their bush-farms. Yamǝlǝg occupies a shallow depression between hillocks. Then comes a stretch of two or three miles of typical orchard bush before the homesteads of Sawalǝg and Sie are reached. Thence a traveller can

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continue through Sie-Tɛndaaŋ or Namɔyalug to Gban, Gar, and Kpatia or to Buug, Duusi, Datɔk, and beyond to Pieluŋ and Nangodi with scarcely a break in the continuity of settlement.

In addition to these two main blocks of settlements—let us call them, for convenience, the Tongo district and the Sie district—there are scattered Tale settlements, separated from them and from one another by stretches of bush, between them and the Volta rivers—Namooraana, Diga'ar, Tola, Kumbude, Biuŋ, and Gbiug-on-the-river being the most important. But other settlements on the frontiers of Taleland, the inhabitants of which are not recognized as Tallensi by outsiders, also fall into the framework of their political geography.

The first puzzle a stranger must unravel, if he hopes to understand the life of our people, is the apparent contradiction between the density of residential aggregation and the cleavages underlying their social relations. He will meet it latent in simple and casual occurrences, or conspicuously overt in organized collective events such as the communal hunting and fish drives, the Great Festivals, or other ceremonial gatherings.

Taleland is thickly populated. The Tongo district alone has a population of over 12,000 according to the 1931 census. This area of ancient habitation—*tɛŋ kɔrɔg*, an old country, as the natives describe it—has supported a sedentary population for a period which cannot be less than several centuries. Sacrifices are made on graves of ancestors said to have lived ten or eleven generations ago. No one familiar with the people would doubt the authenticity of these graves; but the three centuries or so of settlement this implies must, I believe, be considered a minimum period. Centuries of intermarriage have woven a web of kinship which embraces the whole country. The patterns of institutions and ideas are uniform throughout Taleland. Yet a fundamental dogma of their collective life is that of local and sectional particularism, and of divergence within the common patterns.

The 'Real Talis'

Neither the Tongo people, nor those living in the Sie district, are considered to be real Talis; the 'real Talis' are the folk who live on and around the Tong Hills. The Great Festivals are usually cited as a decisive criterion of classification. The 'real Talis' (*Talis mɛŋa*), a Tɛnzugu elder once stated, are in the following places: Tɛnzugu, Santɛŋ, Yinduur, Sii, Gorogo, Wakii, Gbeog, and Soog, as well as the small settlements near Santɛŋ and the offshoots of Wakii at Gbambee and Woo. '*Tam tɔmɔra Talis tuntuoma, ti Gɔlib ni ti Bɔyaraam*—We perform the works of Talis, our *Gɔlib* and *Bɔyaraam* festivals.' Tongo and Zoo, Yamɔlag and Sie, are Namoos, he continued; and Zubiuŋ and Sɔk, Ba'ari and Yayazuor, belong more closely to the Namoos than to the Talis. '*Bam tɔmɔra namoorɔt*—They celebrate (lit. work) after the Namoo fashion, the *Giŋgaaŋ* and *Da'a* festivals.' There remain Sawalag, Sie-Tɛndaaŋ, Duusi, and the settlements close to them. '*Bam lɛbɔra Namnam sani*—They fall in with the Namnam' (whose chief festival is called *Tɛŋɔn-lɛbɔgɔt*.)[1]

[1] A brief account of one aspect of these festivals is given in my paper 'Ritual

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pression liable to flooding in the rainy season. The people of the Tong Hills consider themselves to be particularly fortunate in this respect. Their homesteads stretch densely across the slopes of the hills, and amid the great boulders and rocky piles of the summit. Singing the praises of their tiny fastness, they contrast it with the plain, where one is always ankle-deep in mud and slush during the rains and scorched by the sun in the dry season. On the hills, they say, a sheltered nook can always be found among the rocks, shady when the sun is most cruel, dry in the severest storm, where the children can play or the grown-ups sit and talk.

The Stability and Continuity of a Settlement

Stability and continuity are essential characteristics of a settlement. They are implied in the native concept of a *tɛŋ* (settlement) as both a definite locality and a fixed community. The ancient settlements have attained a very high degree of stability and continuity. The peripheral settlements are rapidly ceasing to be mere economic apanages to the older centres of habitation, and are taking on the form of permanent and stable units. Being still in process of organization, their structure is fluid compared with that of the ancient settlements, and the dynamic factors of Tale social structure sometimes appear more conspicuously in them than in the latter.

But the older settlements are by no means static. The bounds, the layout, and the internal constitution of a settlement alter continuously, if very slowly. Even in a single year one can see how processes of expansion and contraction, of segmentation and incorporation, are at work all the time. Whenever land changes hands by inheritance, or an office passes by succession, or a man achieves economic independence, a minor reshuffle in the collocation of homesteads takes place. The cumulative effects of these processes of slow but progressive readjustment are clearly exhibited in the contemporary structure of a settlement. They are documented in its constitution and layout, in the location of ancestral graves, the ownership of farm plots, and in ceremonial and political relations. Fixity of location and of the structural plan ensure the stability and continuity of a Tale settlement.

Topographical Distinctions and the Natives' Knowledge of Natural History

Precise local orientation is essential in the economic activities and social relations of the Tallensi. Place-names are often derived from prominent topographical or geographical features. Thus, Tenzugu means the head (*zug*) or highest part of the country (*tɛŋ*), Yayazuor means 'perched on a hill', and many other place-names are popularly believed to be corruptions of topographical or spatial metaphors. Within a settlement topographical variations are distinguished by terms like *tɛŋr*, the lower part (the locative of *tɛŋ*, here in the sense of 'ground'), and *saazugu*, the higher part (lit. head-high, or high up). Conspicuous patches of low-lying land, hillocks, rock piles, ditches, water-holes, streams, &c., are named, and are very often sacred spots. The name may indicate peculiar qualities of the soil, prominent trees, or other landmarks formerly or still

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found at that spot. Thus, Sielug is an uninhabited part of Zubiuŋ, where clay (*siela*) is abundant near the surface, making it unsuitable for cultivation and therefore a favourite pasture. Naɣaberaabo'og ('cattle-poison-grass valley'), the tract of low-lying land renowned as the traditional battle-field of Tongo and Ba'ari, appears to be named after a kind of grass believed to be noxious to cattle. Other such names have a legendary flavour, but the Tallensi, with their characteristic realism, have no myths or legends to account for them. Locality names of this kind are Kumpeɣalɔɣat ('Death carries quivers') and Kurbɔk ('Stooping ditch'). Sacred groves (*tɔŋgbana*) often serve as landmarks to identify a locality; e.g. Dooni (at Doo), means the precincts of that *tɔŋgban*, vaguely defined, as are all such localities, by position and not by definite boundaries.

We shall see later how the social structure of a settlement is anchored to a locality. The physical environment is built into the whole edifice of native life. Tale economic pursuits demand an intimate knowledge—unscientific but remarkably efficient at the level of their social organization and technical development—of natural history and topography. Tale leechcraft, on its empirical side, depends on this knowledge; and every prominent and many an inconspicuous feature of the landscape has its meaning and place in native social relations. A great boulder may be the children's playground, or the women's pounding-floor, or a shrine. A hoary baobab tree is not only an amenity and a source of useful products, but also a lineage shrine. A furrow, an outcrop of laterite, or a fringe of grass, may mark the boundary of a farm plot. A shrub, hardly noticeable on the bank of a dry watercourse, is a medicine. In consequence, the natural environment forms a very important aspect of the native's social space. In his own settlement, and especially in his section of the settlement, he knows every rock and tree and almost every tuft of grass, the qualities of the soil, and the ownership of farm plots.

In addition to his own settlement a man usually knows pretty thoroughly the natural environment of neighbouring settlements with which his clan has close social bonds and, more superficially, that of his mother's natal settlement and of settlements in which close extra-clan kin live. The great majority of men, even the younger men who have been abroad for lengthy periods, are all well versed in the geography, the vegetation, and the fauna of the tracts of bush and river-bank on the borders of Taleland, the economic exploitation of which is indispensable for the subsistence of the natives. Every dry season many men and boys have to go out to the nearest bush to cut grass for thatching, rafters for roofing, shafts for their implements, *bayana* (*Bauhinia*, spp.) bark for the rope used in house-building, canes for their bows and reeds for their arrows, tree-stumps for their shrines, and many medicinal roots and leaves. They go hunting in near and distant tracts of bush, so that most adult men are familiar with every hunting bush within a day's march of their settlement; and they go fishing in the pools left in the river-beds during the dry season. Women are as expert as men in these matters. They take part in the big fishing drives, comb the fields for edible herbs, seek out deposits of clay for pottery and gravel for beating floors, explore the neighbouring bush for firewood, for reeds to make sleeping mats, for fruits and edible leaves.